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APR 10 2007

REMARKS

New claims 30-33 have been added. Claims 6, 12 and 15 are cancelled. Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13, 14, 16-33 are now pending in this application.

The Office action has restricted claims 1-29 into Groups I-VI. In response to the restriction requirement, Applicant elects to prosecute the claims of Group II, claims 7-12, with traverse.

Applicant respectfully traverses the restriction requirement because it is believed that claims 1-18 can be searched and examined without serious burden to the Examiner. MPEP §803 states: "If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions."

The Office action identifies each group of claims as being classified in a particular class and subclass. Applicant assumes that the Office action identifies these classifications in order to indicate a serious burden. Although Applicant does not agree that a serious burden exists for the reasons listed below, Applicant assumes that because the claims have been classified into different subclasses, that any references cited against a particular group of claims will only come from that particular subclass. If a single reference is used in a rejection of two groups of claims, Applicant will take this rejection as an admission that the claims do not in fact belong in different subclasses and that therefore no serious burden exists to examine these two groups of claims together.

Regarding the claims of Groups I and II, claim 1 is a method of adding a file to database and requires computation of a unique identifier and computation of a hash value. The identifier and hash value are stored in a data structure associated with the database. Similarly, Claim 7 is a method of retrieving a file from a database and requires retrieving a unique identifier and a hash value from a data structure. A hash value is computed for the file using the verification hash function, similar to the third step of claim 1. As such, an examination of either claim 1 or 7 would easily lead to references also relevant to the other claim; therefore, there is no serious burden to examine these two groups of claims together.

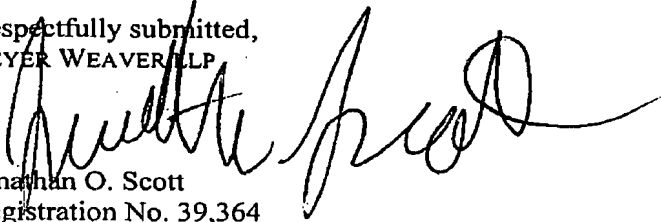
Regarding claims 13-16 of Group III, claim 13 also deals with a database of files and requires a unique identifier for a first file, and a hash value being computed from the first file

using a verification hash function. Also included is a data structure to which is added both the unique identifier and hash value. Because many of these same elements are also present in the claims of Groups I and II, it is respectfully submitted that there is no serious burden to examine the claims of Group III along with the claims of Groups I and II.

Regarding claims 17 and 18 of Group IV, claim 17 deals with upgrading a hash function in a database of files and requires a data structure that has a pair of a unique identifier and a hash value for each file in the database, the verification hash value having been computed using a verification hash function. Because many of these same elements are also present in the claims of Groups I, II and III, it is respectfully submitted that there is no serious burden to examine the claims of Group IV along with the claims of Groups I, II and III.

Reconsideration of this application and issuance of a Notice of Allowance at an early date are respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would in any way expedite prosecution, please do not hesitate to telephone the undersigned at (612) 252-3330.

Respectfully submitted,  
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